

**Summary of Presentations  
on Closing the Special Education Achievement Gap-  
Johnson County Middle School and  
North Hardin High School**

School-Wide

***Johnson County Middle School***

- High expectations for all students is a commitment from all the staff; it is also district-wide
- Teachers are in teams with a special education teacher on each team; teachers are flexible as team membership changes every year to keep fresh new ideas flowing
- Conduct retreats with central office, school administrators and teachers to have in-depth discussions on achievement of students and address specific student needs
- District wide alignment of curriculum and vertical alignment K-12
- Actively build relationships with the community and businesses, i.e., businesses display the word of the week on their marquees or billboards
- Teachers share and use open-response questions throughout the school year
- District has five-day preschool and kindergarten programs
- Conduct learning style inventories on each student
- Data analysis is conducted almost daily; student work is monitored constantly and revisions in instruction are made as needed
- Staff provide a lot of their own professional development
- Staff teach and practice pride and respect for all; they try to give students confidence to try new things and to believe in themselves
- Celebrate successes of the students during the daily announcements and at assemblies

***North Hardin High School***

- Developed a school culture that embraces and addresses all students; says every student can and every student will
- Theme and belief is “No excuses, just results”
- Conducted a voluntary scholastic review
- Classrooms are monitored to ensure curriculum and instruction meet expectations
- Started reading focused English class for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who need the extra help and will be starting a similar math class
- Every student is involved in a 20-minute a day “thinking and planning” period where they look at their IGP, learning styles inventories and goals
- Technology is integrated into instruction
- Has a policy on using instructional time wisely
- District has provided funding for additional tutor for students who need extra help
- Entire staff has received training on how to assess student work and how to use that assessment to plan instruction
- Developed a culture where students feel they can talk to teachers and staff
- Celebrate student success frequently

## Special Education Specific

### ***Johnson County Middle School***

- 13-14% of student population is special education
- Emphasis on inclusion and collaboration in regular education classroom; most special education students in inclusion; has some resource rooms but collaborates with regular teacher in resource also
- Staff takes individual education program (IEP) meetings very seriously and uses them to plan for the students
- All regular education teachers on the team attend the IEP meetings
- IEPs are implemented all day long by all staff (regular and special); this is monitored by leadership
- Has transition meetings for students coming from the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and for those going into high school
- Special education teachers provide training to regular education teachers on the individual needs of students
- Held an all staff retreat just on the topic of instructional strategies and how to differentiate instruction based on students' unique needs
- All teachers on the team are expected to know the student's IEP and what accommodations need to be made

### ***North Hardin High School***

- About 14% of student population is special education
- Hired an inclusion specialist to assist regular teachers
- Hired an additional special education teacher because true collaboration requires more teacher time
- Regular and special education teachers have joint professional development
- Special education teachers attend core content meetings and professional development in the core content area where they spend the majority of their day